

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7713

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 1890

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT IT

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR' S CALL ON PRIME MINISTER

DEPT PASS WHITE HOUSE

1. AMBASSADOR' S MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER ANDREOTTI WAS MOST CORDIAL AND WARM, APPROPRIATE TO MEETING OF OLD FRIENDS IN NEW CIRCUMSTANCES; CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH WERE OBVIOUSLY VERY PLEASING TO PRIME MINISTER. AMBASSADOR CONVEYED PRESIDENT' S PERSONAL GREETING AND GIFT CRYSTAL ASH TRAY. PRIME MINISTER RETURNED BEST WISHES, AND EMPHASIZED HIS HIGH PERSONAL REGARD FOR PRESIDENT. AMBASSADOR EXTENDED PRESIDENT' S INVITATION FOR APRIL 17-18 VISIT WHICH PRIME MINISTER WAS DELIGHTED TO ACCEPT, AND TO WHICH HE LOOKS FORWARD WITH MUCH PLEASURE.

2. ANDREOTTI SAID U. S.- ITALIAN RELATIONS ARE GOOD, BUT COULD BE STRENGTHENED EVEN FURTHER IN SOME AREAS. HE SAID HE EXPECTED DEVELOPMENT OF EVEN CLOSER RELATIONS WOULD BE FACILITATED BY AMBASSADOR' S MISSION. INTERNATIONAL MONETARY SITUATION CONTINUED TO BE OF CONCERN, AND HE HOPED DISCUSS THIS AND OTHER MATTERS OF MUTUAL INTEREST IN GREATER DETAIL ON ANOTHER OCCASION IN NEAR FUTURE.

3. AMBASSADOR INFORMED PRIME MINISTER OF INTENTION HAVE DISCUSSION IN DEPTH WITH FOREIGN MINISTER ON MATTERS INCLUDING INTERNATIONAL MONETARY SITUATION AND MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM.
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AMBASSADOR SUGGESTED MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER SOON AFTER, BEFORE ANDREOTTI DEPARTURE FOR WASHINGTON. ANDREOTTI AGREED.

4. WITH REGARD TO DOMESTIC ITALIAN SITUATION ANDREOTTI REFERRED TO THE MANY INTERNAL PROBLEMS WITH WHICH HIS (DC) PARTY IS STRUGGLING, AND TO THE DELICATE BALANCE OF DOMESTIC POLITICAL FORCES IN THE COUNTRY. DESPITE THE THOUSAND PROBLEMS TO BE OVERCOME, ANDREOTTI WAS CONFIDENT THAT, GIVEN ANY REASONABLE DEVELOPMENT OF CIRCUMSTANCES, HE COULD CONTROL THE SITUATION AND KEEP THE GOVERNMENT COMPACT AT LEAST UNTIL THE DC CONGRESS (NOW SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 6-10) OR EVEN LONGER

5. PRIME MINISTER AT CLOSE OF MEETING EMPHASIZED ONCE MORE HOW MUCH HE LOOKS FORWARD TO VISIT AND MEETING WITH PRESIDENT. HE STRESSED HOW MUCH HE IS GRATEFUL FOR UNDERSTANDING OF ITALY AND ITALIAN PROBLEMS WHICH PRESIDENT HAS ALWAYS SHOWN, AND WHICH IS DEMONSTRATED ONCE AGAIN IN SENDING AMBASSADOR VOLPE TO ITALY. ANDREOTTI SAID AMBASSADOR COULD BE SURE THAT PRIME MINISTER' S TELEPHONE LINE ALWAYS OPEN FOR JOHN VOLPE. AMBASSADOR REPLIED WITH ASSURANCES OF PRIME MINISTER' S WARM WELCOME IN UNITED STATES, AND WITH ASSURANCES OF AMBASSADOR' S AVAILABILITY TO BE OF HELP TO PRIME MINISTER AND GOI AT ANY TIME, IN EVERY APPROPRIATE WAY.

6. COMMENT: ANDREOTTI OBVIOUSLY DELIGHTED WITH INVITATION, AND WHOLEHEARTEDLY SINCERE IN HIS GOODWILL FOR UNITED STATES AND FOR PRESIDENT PERSONALLY. HIS EXPRESSIONS OF REGARD FOR PRESIDENT BRING TO MIND HIS PUBLIC EXPRESSIONS OF SUPPORT FOR PRESIDENT NIXON DURING 1972 CAMPAIGN, WHICH CAUSED SOME CLAMOR IN ITALIAN POLITICAL CIRCLES ON THE OCCASION. VOLPE

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